

HOW SHALL A YOUNG MAN QUALIFY HIMSELF FOR BUSINESS?

BY G. M. SMITHDEAL,
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SMITH DEAL BUSINESS COLLEGE, RICHMOND, VA.

Henry Clay said, "Young man, qualify yourself for business. The professions are full, and the age demands it."

Said Bovee, "Formerly, when great fortunes were made only in war, war was business; but now, when great fortunes are made only by business, business is war."

It is probably not generally known that the business training schools of to-day (usually called business colleges), are of recent origin, scarcely any of them having a history of over fifty years.

Previous to the organization of the modern business college, bookkeeping and perhaps other subjects pertaining to business, were taught in a way, but the way was very unsatisfactory and impracticable. The student was taught little more than to copy sets of books already worked up.

The modern business school not only teaches practically single entry, double entry, corporation and voucher bookkeeping, so that students can go right out of the school room to the business office and keep the books successfully, but also teaches commercial law, arithmetic, including rapid mental calculations, penmanship, nature and use of business papers, banking, wholesale and retail merchandising, business correspondence, shorthand, typewriting, and practical English. Some of these schools teach, also, telegraphy, salesmanship, civil government, mechanical drawing engineering, etc.

Wanamakers Opinion.
If it be true, as the merchant prince, John Wanamaker, has said, that it would be just as wise for one to undertake the practice of medicine or law without previous preparation as to begin business without first learning something about it, and if it be further true, as President Garfield puts it, "Business colleges originated in this country as a protest against the insufficiency of our system of education—as a protest against the failure, the absolute failure of our American schools and colleges to fit young men and women for the business of life; these business colleges furnishing their graduates with a better education for practical purposes than either Princeton, Harvard or Yale," then no wonder that these modern business schools have increased with remarkable rapidity. Without an existence fifty years ago, they number to-day, in this country, probably 1,500 schools, with an attendance of 500,000 students. Most of these schools enroll both sexes. A large number run all the year without vacations, though many close their night sessions during the summer.

Some time ago I read a pamphlet entitled, "College Education for Men of Business," by Dr. Broadbent, in the interest of Richmond College. The writer's object was to convince young men of the importance of securing a college education in order to be successful in business. Just before reading this pamphlet, the editor of a daily paper in Danville, where I had just established a branch school, came in to welcome me, and to offer gratuitously any service his paper could render, and added, "When I left the University of Virginia, with my diploma, I was stuffed with Greek and Latin, French and German, theologies and laws, until I could hardly stand straight; but I knew no more about business than a child."

The question arises, then, does the university man's experience discount Dr. Broadbent's argument? I think not, though business success may be and often is obtained without attending a literary college; but where, ever and however secured, we need a good general education upon which to build most successfully any special or technical course of training. One of the greatest hindrances to success on the part of those who attend literary schools is the lack of efficiency in grammar, spelling, use of capital letters, punctuation, letter-writing, arithmetic, etc. If instead of studying dead languages, higher mathematics and other subjects which will be little used, if at all, after the stu-



G. M. SMITHDEAL.

dent leaves school, those whose time and means necessarily limit their education were to put this time on the ordinary branches above named, much would be gained to their profit and success.

On Vertical Writing.
Permit me to say here that I believe our school authorities, innocently enough, doubtless, impose a serious misfortune upon our public schools by introducing and requiring all to practice vertical or semi-vertical writing. Everybody recognizes the value of legible, smooth, rapid handwriting, notwithstanding the extensive use of the typewriter. There are many reasons for the conclusion that any approach to the vertical writing is unnatural for the great majority of per-

sons. I shall have to be brief, but wish to give one of these reasons: Out of the hundred and thousands of young people who have been taught vertical writing, very, very few continue it. Their writing will slant a little one way or the other, and very often some letters will be vertical while others will slant to the left or to the right of a vertical line. I have observed these diversities, and have seldom seen a uniformly vertical writing. I have had many young people tell me, and have seen myself, especially among those who had first used the slant method, that their writing had been injured if not largely ruined because of their having been compelled to practice upon the vertical system.

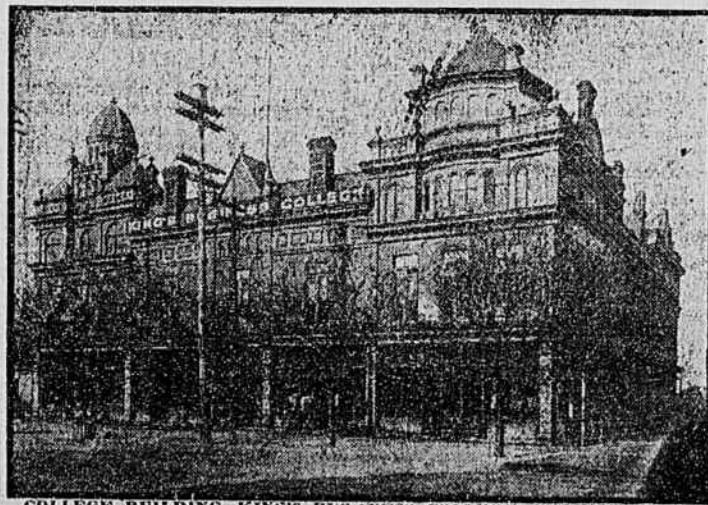
Business Education and Its Growth

(Continued From First Page.)

and 5 to July 5 and 6 for the reason that a sufficient number of applications were not received to take the examination. This shows plainly that stenographers are in demand; that the government cannot secure enough young people to fill positions paying salaries of from \$1,000 to \$1,200 per annum. There is no other calling which offers a surer and quicker road to a good position.

Mere education is of little value as a money-earning power, unless you have coupled with it skill, which is acquired only by thorough training. It is the duty of every young person to get an education; it is the duty of the parents to insist and see to it that their children get an education. If the young person is wise, and if the parent is wise, both will recognize the value of an institution where practical education and training go hand in hand.

The National Business College, Roanoke, Va., is such an institution.



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State Not Equal to Task of Educating Its Children.

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Why? Simply because the State is not equal to the task of educating its children from the public taxes. But do not the great Western States support all their institutions from public taxes? No, they have vast sums from the sale of public lands, which go to furnish educational advantages to their people that we shall not be able to furnish ours within the next fifty years. In that time Virginia will be hopelessly left behind in the race.

But the Eastern States have no such source of revenue for the support of their schools, and has not Massachusetts good schools of all sorts? That is true, but the State of Massachusetts does not undertake to provide by public taxes for the higher education of its citizens. This it leaves for public spirited private citizens. Virginia could have not but elementary and higher schools, and even some good industrial and educational schools, if it did not have to support the University of Virginia, the Virginia Polytechnic Institute, the Virginia Military Institute and William and Mary.

Here is the weak point of our system in Virginia; we are making the impression that we do not need the help of private citizens in our educational scheme. Men of public spirit, who might and would help in this great cause of education are led to believe that the State can do and is doing all the work that needs to be done for educating our citizens.

That is not true. And I want to emphasize the fact that the State cannot and will not properly educate its people unless the public spirited Virginians are enlisted in this most stupendous task that was ever undertaken. This task is that of developing all the brain and character power of all its citizens to the very highest point possible.

If, therefore, we are going to succeed in educating our people, we have got to call to our aid, as does Massachusetts, those men to whom have been entrusted large means. They have got to be made to feel their responsibility in aiding to make a great State; for without their aid Virginia is not going to be a great State in the future.

Virginia is thus not able from State taxes to furnish well equipped schools of all sorts. Will its public spirited citizens appreciate their privilege, and by founding institutions and endowing those already founded, give the young people of the State the advantages that Eastern States give their citizens?

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